High Cost of Higher Education

†728. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the means of higher education are becoming costlier in the country day by day for students and the general public;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Central Government have been adding fuel to fire by increasing fees of Central Universities and membership-fee of public libraries like Sahitya Academy;

(c) if so, whether Government would withdraw such moves;

(d) if so, by when; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (e) the information will be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

Reforming Higher Education/Universities

729. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken initiatives recently for reforming/upgrading/strengthening higher education and universities;

(b) if so, the details regarding comprehensive plan of action for the current year and the Ninth Five year plan;

(c) the details of proposals received/finalised/under consideration; and

(d) the details of proposals for joint ventures/Foreign Direct Investment in educational institutions received and action taken?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) The Government and UGC have taken initiatives from time to time for reforming

†Original notice of the Question was recived in Hindi.

upgrading/strengthening of higher education in the country. Some of the major steps taken in this behalf are as follows:—

Substantial revision of pay scales of University and College teachers w.e.f. 1.1.1996 so as to ensure the recruitment of better quality of personnel in education. Opportunities provided for training and career advancement for teachers. All-India eligibility Test introduced to attract best talent to the teaching profession.

Academic staff college established for re-orientation of newly appointed university and college teachers.

- Curriculum Development Centres in Science and Humanities established to modernise curricula.
- Financial assistance provided by UGC for improvement of teaching and research under Special Assistance Programmes.
- Inter-University Centres established by UGC to provide front-line facilities and services for advancement of research in the University system.
- Higher priority given to grant of autonomy to selected colleges.
- Guidelines for implementation of an Academic Calendar circulated. These guidelines emphasize observance of at least 180 teaching days by universities/colleges.
- Regulations for minimum standards for the award of first degree, minimum working days etc. notified by UGC.
- Decision taken to the effect that all universities and colleges should get themselves accredited by the year 2000 and 2003 respectively.

(b) UGC has formulated various schemes to operationalise the thrust areas in the 9th Plan. These schemes are clustered under the following broad heads:—

(i) Infrastructure Development of Universities and Colleges.

(ii) Relevance of Education.

(iii) Promotion of Excellence and Quality in Education.

(iv) Equity and Access.

(v) Management of Higher Education System and UGC Administration.

(vi) Engineering and Technology.

(c) and (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Sub-Standard food under ICDS in Orissa

730. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the distribution of sub-standard food to the children and pregnant mothers through Integrated Child Development Programme in Orissa;

(b) whether these sub-standard foods were distributed in the cyclone affected areas in the State through CARE, the nodal Agency for all American assistance; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Qualifications for TGTs/PGTs in Kendriya Vidyalayas

731. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Degree/Diploma in Teaching/ Education is an essential qualification for the post of TGT and PGT in Kendriya Vidyalayas, which if not possessed at the time of initial recruitment, had to be acquired within first three years of appointment; and

(b) if so, the circumstances under which some PGTs of Bhopal region had been allowed to continue though they did not acquire the